REBEL TIME RECORDS

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ROCK AGAINST RACISM

PUNK ROCK AND ANTI-RACIST ACTION IN MONTREAL

We've long been fans of the Roots Rock Rebel radio show (Wednesdays from 10PM to 12AM on CKUT out of Montreal) and its host Aaron. Aaron describes the show as a "weekly dose of ska, reggae, punk and class war politics," and that really does sum it up quite nicely.

Aaron has been kind enough to play Rebel Time Records music and inteview Rebel Time Records bands, so when we heard he was heading up Rock Against Racism shows in Montreal, we were intrigued and figured it was the perfect time for us to interview him...

Rebel Time: Rock Against Racism started in 1976 in England...can you tell us what RAR is all about?

Aaron: Sure! From what I understand about RAR, it was a movement started in London to confront the rise of the British National Party (BNP), which was a racist nationalist movement that was recruiting a lot of working class white youth. England has had a lot of problems with racism and xenophobia over the years (and still does today), but also has a proud tradition of anti-fascist activism going all the way back to the 1930s and the infamous Battle of Cable street. There is a powerful song by Oi Polloi about that incident called "Let the boots do the talking". Anyways, I digress...There were massive outdoor concerts with some amazing bands at the time, like The Clash, X-Ray Spex, and Steel Pulse, to bring white and black youth together against the BNP. In fact, there is an awesome documentary about the Clash called Rude Boy that has some original footage from the first RAR concert in Victoria Park. For me, the original RAR was powerful because it showed that music was more than just a cultural expression, but could also be a political tool to set off movements for social justice. Also, it was the first time that punk rock and reggae were brought together in such an inspiring way, and there is a close relationship with those two genres right up to today. Those bands mentioned above are still some of my favorite bands.

When I was getting into punk rock and ska in Toronto in the 90's, there was also a rise in neo-nazi bonehead activity around the city. I remember hearing about many racist beatings on the news when I was a kid, and there were fascist scum-bags like Ernst Zundel and Paul Fromm living in the city, and they had a lot of influence. To confront this, the Anti-Racist Action (ARA) got organized, and had a large presence. They would put on really fun shows under the banner of Rock Against Racism, or sometimes called "Ska Ska Oi!". Usually they would be

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at the Reverb, Kathedral (which has since been gentrified and turned into a yuppie furniture store), or El Mocambo. Those events were so incredibly fun. They were always all-ages, and featured not only ska and punk bands, but also people from the rave scene, hip-hop groups - it was just an amazing explosion of anti-racist underground youth culture. Great bands used to play at their events like Marilyn's Vitamins, King Apparatus, The Planet Smashers, The Kingpins.. the list could go on. I remember one time Sum 41 opened up for the Planet Smashers at an ARA show before anyone knew who the fuck they were!

Anyways, now that I've been living in Montreal for 10 years, and I'm almost 30, I wanted to try to re-create that scene year, so I started RAR-Montreal. The idea is simple. Katacombes, which is Montreal's coolest worker-run punk venue, asked me to start promoting a monthly DJ night there. But then I thought, why stop at just a DJ night? Why not have live bands, radical booksellers and info kiosks, and occasional film screenings? Each month it is a fundraiser for a different grassroots anti-racist or anti-capitalist group. That's how we roll.

Rebel Time: What prompted you to start up Rock Against Racism shows in Montreal? Has there been an upsurge in racist activity that prompted this?

Aaron: I love the punk and ska scenes here. Most of the bands are great. But I think the scene is lacking a lot of the politics that were there when I first got into this music. Punk, ska, and reggae started as anti-establishment music, so let's bring it back to the roots, eh? And so often you'll be at shows, and either bands or the audience will say stupid fucking sexist or homophobic bullshit. I guess everyone knows racism is taboo today, but punks and "rudies" still think they can get away with treating women and queers like lesser humans. Fuck that. We gotta re-politicize the scene, but do it in a way that is still fun, and that isn't hitting people over the head with our anti-oppression politics.

At all of our shows, we're going to have volunteers who will be kinda vibe-checkers. This means that if anyone is making anyone else feel uncomfortable, it will be dealt with. For example, so many women get harassed or hit on against their will at shows, or people of colour are made to feel unwelcome. We're trying to foster a more welcoming atmosphere where we actively call out any intolerant bullshit.

Also, there are so many great groups and causes out there that need money, because they certainly aren't getting any from the government. I'm an anarchist and a community organizer first and foremost, so I really want to help these groups out.

Rebel Time: What are your plans? What do you have lined up?

Aaron: We have monthly RAR shows planned right up until spring. It's pretty exciting! The launch of the series is January 31. It will be a fundraiser for the CKUT Homelessness Marathon. We'll be screening the film Squeegee Punks In Traffic (S.P.I.T.), and then there will be performances from two great local punk bands, Boids and Action Sédition.

Our February show is February 14, which is also significant because it's Valentine's day, but more importantly, there are actions held across Canada in solidarity with missing and murdered aboriginal women.

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So our fundraiser that night is for Families of Sisters in Spirit, an aboriginal-led group in Ottawa working on the issue. That show will be all women-fronted bands, including Studfinder (riot grrl), Dirty Boots (experimental synth-soul), and We R Dying to Kill U. I'm very excited about the last band! We R Dying to Kill U are an anarchist experimental post-punk dance act. They accompanied Penny Rimbaud from Crass when he performed in Montreal last summer. It was mind-blowing.

Our show in March will be March 14, and that will be part of Israeli Apartheid Week. We're doing it under the banner of "Punks Against Apartheid" (www.punksagainstapartheid.com), and all the money will be going to support the Boycott, Divestments, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israeli apartheid, and in solidarity with Palestine. There are 3 great local punk bands playing that one, including LOUDbag, Mayday, and Silent Bones.

"PUNKS AND RUDIES CAN STILL GET AWAY WITH TREATING WOMEN AND QUEERS LIKE LESSER HUMAN BEINGS. FUCK THAT. WE GOTTA RE-POLITICIZE THE SCENE."

And finally, our April 25 show will be a benefit for Solidarity Across Borders (www.solidarityacrossborders.org). Details to come on that one, but we have one VERY exciting band confirmed!

Rebel Time: All the shows are at Katacombes. Katacombes rules. So does Janick from Katacombes.

Aaron: Rock Against Racism is, of course, associated with music and one of RAR's slogans is "Love Music, Hate Racism." What music are you 'loving?'what MTL bands are you stoked on? Who might we see performing at Montreal RAR shows?

Well, of course I'm loving all of the bands mentioned above who are playing RAR. There are some bands who wanted to play the series, but the dates didn't work with their touring schedule. As far as ska bands go, I'm really enjoying The Fundamentals and Kman and the 45s.

On the punk side of things, there is no shortage of amazing bands in Montreal. I'm really loving some queer-punk bands, like The Facials and Dekoder. Everyone should check out Dekoder. Their music is dark and hard. Jeunesse Apatride have been doing their thing for around 15 years now, and they're still one of my favorite local bands. I like some of the other RASH bands like Union Made, La Gachette, and Hold a Grudge. Oh, and the East End Radicals new album is GREAT.

Rebel Time: What is the anti-fa scene like in Montreal? It seems to me that Montreal has always had a strong SHARP and RASH presence and lots of bands with anti-fa sentiments - is this still the case?

Aaron:nYeah, there is a big RASH presence here. Not so much SHARP these days. I know that historically, there has been some tension between those groups because SHARP are less political than RASH. I'm a bit disconnected from the skinhead scene. I don't identify as a skinhead at all, I'm more of an old school punk or ska kid. But I guess we all love the same music and politics.

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SKA'D UP PUNK FROM BRISTOL, UK

Spanner is bringing their revolutionary punk-ska sounds to Canada this April/May! With chopping guitars, pounding drums, basslines galore and horns to boot, Spanner's politically charged tunes will bring you to your feet.

Download Spanner's album Crisis for free at rebeltimerecords.bandcamp.com. Donate some cash and help fund the tour. Make your mother proud!

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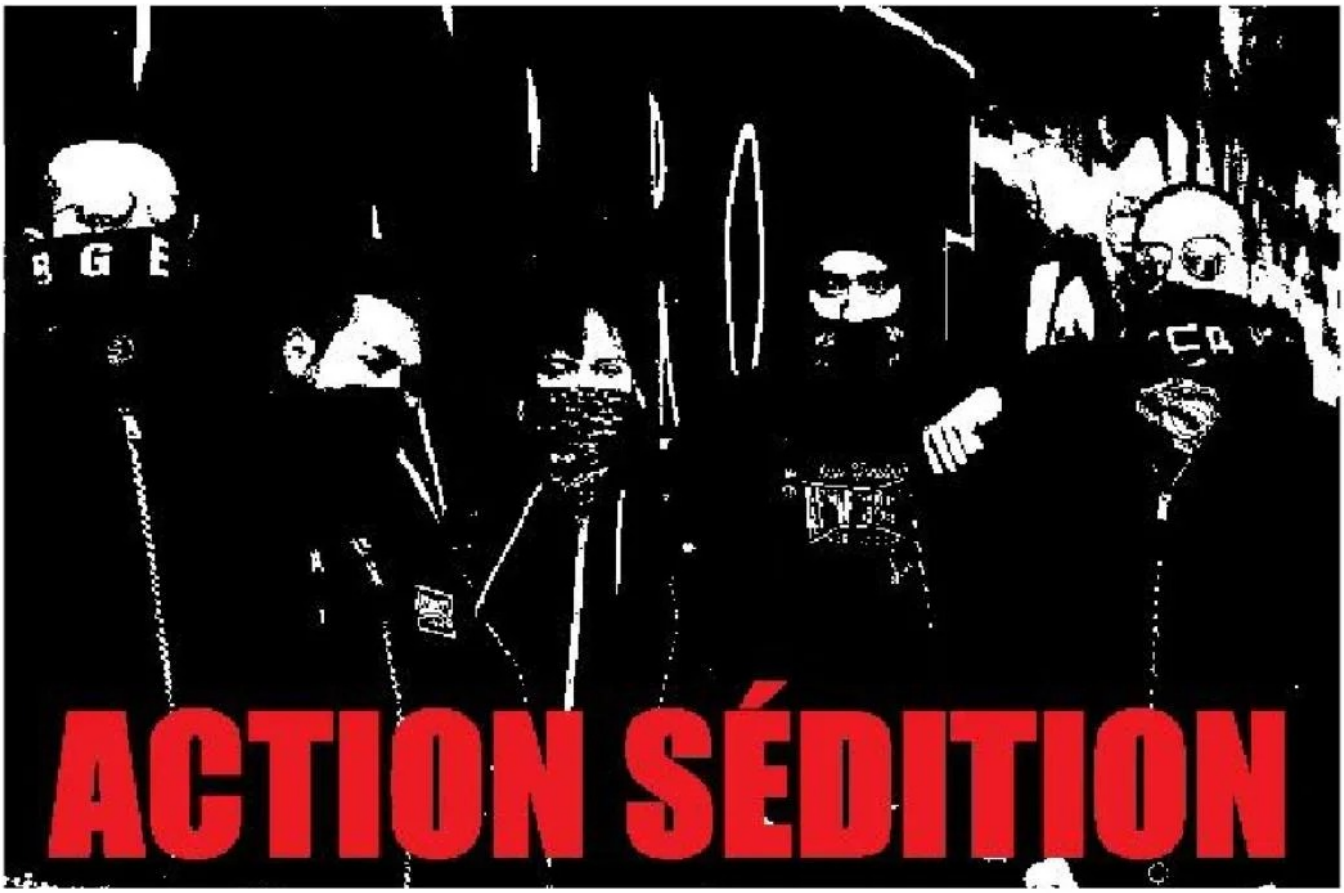

ACTION SÉDITION

If you follow Rebel Time Records on Facebook or our blog, you'll know that Action Sédition is one of the bands we've been excited about as of late. Back in November 2012 we heard Action Sédition for the first time, via a Youtube video for the song "Prisonniers Politique." We loved the music and message and immediately hit the band up for the interview which follows.

The interview was completed by the entire band and the answers are in both french and english (french version available at rebeltimeproductions.wordpress.com)

You can hear a few tracks off of their just released at actionsedition.bandcamplcom or search youtube for a video or two.

We are looking forward to seeing Action Sédition (as well as fellow Quebec bands Hold A Grudge, Mayday and Farlers Fury) in Hamilton for Rebel Fest 3 on April 26/27, 2013.

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Rebel Time: Action Sédition is something of a new band on the Montreal scene (and also new to us!). Please introduce yourselves...who does what in the band?

Action Sédition: Hi, in fact we are a band composed of 5 members. Our current members composition exists for about 1 year, but we could say that our band is the successor of many other musical projects which started about 5 years ago. The musical project that became Action Sédition started about 2 years ago. We've made our first gig on september 2011. For the current members of the band, there's Eric on vocals, there's Bo (Open Wounds) at the guitar and back-up vocals, then there's Pooki (In Situ) also at the guitar, followed by Émilie on bass (Diarhée Bucale, Les Gens d'Armes, The Bombs), who is also singing in duo with Éric, and at last, there is Junior at the drums. The band members were part of other various musical projects, from grindcore to hardcore, including street punk.

RT: According to your bio, "Action Sedition's lineage is leftist, anti-capitalist and anti-racist." How would you describe your politics?

AS: We can say that we're a lot influenced by what we call the far left, but also by the radical left politics. In the same lineage, we can see in our influence the redskins and anarcho-punk movements. In fact, we could summarize our band with the tag "Rock Libertaire" (Anarcho-Rock). We have political positions which oppose every form of discrimination, may it be patriarchy, capitalism, or racism. Our texts also introduce our political fight and the social struggles all over the world. You can see that position through the shows we've played, which many of them are benefit concerts for politcal groups or community organizations, like the COBP (Regroupment Against Police Brutality), or events related to the students strike. We believe it is also important not only to talk about such subjects, but also to get involved. That's why most of the band members get involved in different radical left militant groups.

"We believe it is also important not only to talk about such subjects, but also to get involved. That's why most of the band members get involved in different radical left militant groups."

RT: As far as your lineage goes musically and lyrically, what are some of the bands that have inspired Action Sédition?

AS: We've been a lot influenced by bands' sounds that are related to punk and oi, and even to hardcore. Among our favorite bands, there is Brigada Flores Magon, Lois Foiros, Bolchoï, Heyoka, Oi Polloi, Non Servium, Angelic Upstarts, Opcio K-95 and also Bérurier Noir for their lyrics. In the local scene, there is Banlieue Rouge, Union Made, Street Trooper, Corrigan Fest, and our biggest influence which is Jeunesse Apatride. Obviously, these bands inspired us at the same time with their political speech, but also with their music.

RT: You have just recorded and released an album (Rapport De Force). What are some of the themes on the album? Did you self-release this CD?

AS: The first album is called "Rapport de Force", which was released on December 17th. The album begins with a pro-feminist song named "Soeurs d'Armes". This song

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was rightly inspired by our comrades of the Montreal Sisterhood, who are also doing the back-up vocals in this particular song. We have another song talking about political prisoners that can be related to the protests that happened all during last Spring, with the Québec students strike, where a lot of people have been unfairly arrested, even if the song was written shortly before all the protest movement. We don't only critize things in our songs, we also talk about different themes. For example, with talk about the immigration process, we talk about friendship and solidarity, and also about the workers' struggle.

The CD was self-produced with the help of the K6A, a Hip-Hop regroupment from Montreal composed of some friends of us. For the rest of the album, it was all made by band members. For example, Bo designed the booklet and it's one of our friend who took the pictures.

RT: There seem to be a lot of 'political' bands coming from Quebec...why do you think that is? Are there any bands you would recommend?

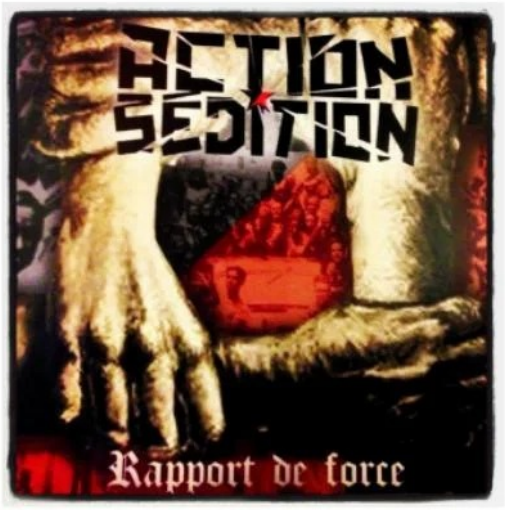
AS: Yes, it's true, a lot of bands in Quebec are politicized, and a big number of them are from Montreal, just like us. We think here about our friends in Mayday and Shotcallers. There are a lot of bands with whom we share the same values. We're talking here about La Gachette, Les Ordures Ioniques, Bomb Dromp, No Laws Apply, Crimes, Hold a Grudge, The Prowlers, Scab Coma, but we think more specifically of Jeunesse Apatride and Union Made. Those last two band are our main sources of inspiration.

If we look a bit away from the punk scene, we can also recommend you bands like Mise en Demeure, which is a humoristic-political band. In the hip hop scence, there's also Webster and the Limoilou Starz Crew that we like a lot, and we also recommend you folks band like Chahut de Ruelle or United Steelworkers of Montreal.

Quebec is culturally close to the european scene, in particular the french one, unlike the rest of Canada which is more related to the american scene, a really less politicized scene. In the same lineage, we can mention the french punk bands Parabellum and Les Ramoneurs de Ménhir, who are really politicized bands who shared the stage with us. This shows how close the french punk scene is with the Quebec scene. Montreal's scene is nothing like the rest of Quebec, because it is a really progressive scene.

We can explain part of the politicization of Montreal's bands with a few factors. First of all, Montreal is a multi-cultural city, and in second, Montreal is the place where lots of political groups act. For example, Montreal was the center of the students strike movement last Spring.

RT: So there you have it, an introduction to Action Sedition. Contact them and get a copy of their CD today!



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Without further ado, here is a bit of an interview with Mayday...they're from Montreal, they are RASH and SHARP and they've just self-released a 4-song EP - get it at maydaymtl.bandcamp.com.

Look out for Mayday at Rebel Fest on April 26/27 2013 in Hamilton!

French version of the interview can be found at rebeltimeproductions.wordpress.com

Rebel Time: Mayday is a new band out of Montreal, Quebec...who is in the band and who does what?

Mayday: The band has 4 members, Dead Frank sings lead vocals and plays guitar, Sissel plays second guitar, Mathieu 'Stakhanov' plays bass and Francis 'BébébPunk' plays drums. Usually Dead Frank writes our songs, Stakhanov adds the lyrics, and Bébépunk adds the drums.

RT: What made the four of you come together as a band? What do you hope to accomplish?

MD: Aside from Stakhanov, all the band members have played in other bands. Most people outside of the Montreal scene probably won't recognize the band names, but for the sake of posterity, Sissel has played in Diarhé Bucale and Les Gens d'Armes, Dead Frank has played in The Nailheads, Out Class and Shot Callers, and Bébépunk has played in so many bands I won't list them all, but here are a few which could be considered the most important, Killing Field, Out Class, Bastard86 and Shot Callers.

We've all been friends for years, some have us have been

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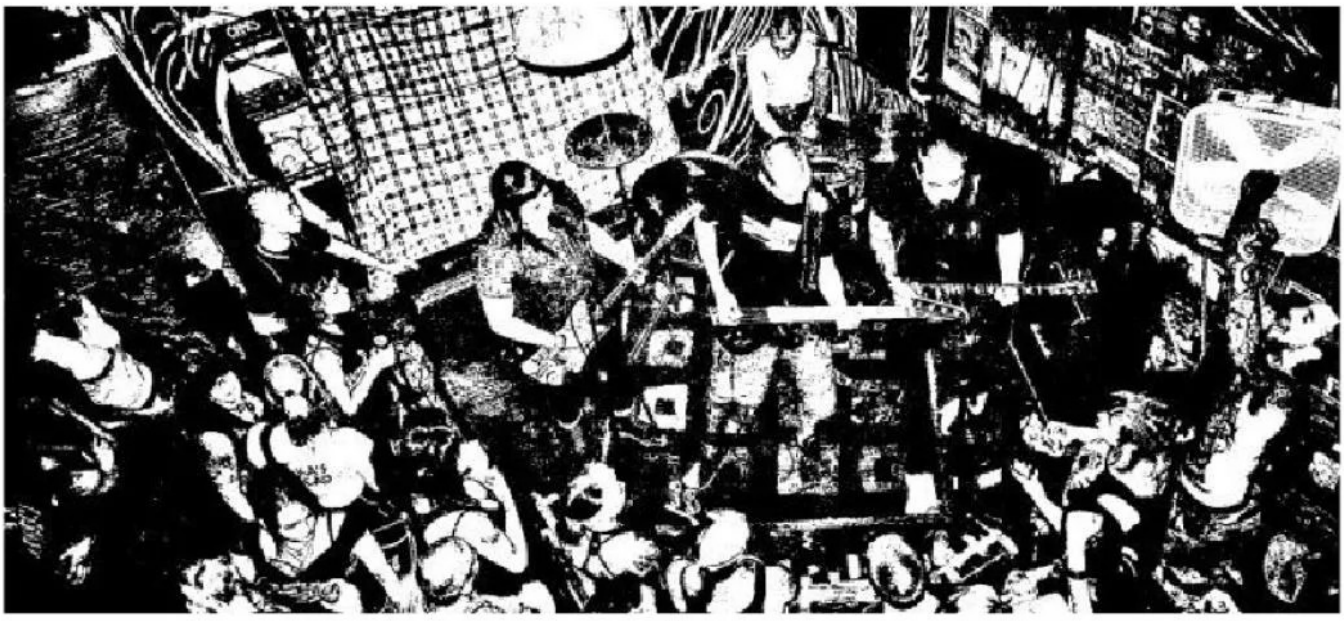
friends for as long as ten years, so last spring when Dead Frank wanted to start a new band the line up just came together naturally. We've been together for a bit less than a year, but things have gone better than expected, and we're already receiving invitations to play in big shows such as the one with Hardskin. We've also been able to release a demo very quickly, and receive support from Rebel Time. As a result we've started to work on some more serious initiatives in the group, and if all goes well, we'll release our first album in the summer of 2013.

RT: You have a 4-song EP out called Excepte Une Fois A Verdun...tell us about the songs on this release? What are the songs about?

MD: If we do have a few political songs that are not yet recorded, this ep is made up of more personal tracks. Coup pour Coup talks about the fight and perseverance we must all apply to our lives in order to move forward. You Have My Back talks about friendship, and is dedicated to our crew in Montreal. Both Straight to Hell and Si Seulement are songs I wrote when I wasn't doing so well. Straight to Hell is about not knowing where you're going, not being sure if you're on the right track, and questioning whether you're really living your values. Si Seulement is a special dedication to all my insomniac friends.

RT: Mayday describes itself as "100% anti-fascist, 100% anti-capitalist, working class rock n roll." Can you describe your politics in a little more detail?

MD: Even if we're not always singing about politics, it's important for our band to be making a political statement. We're playing for the love of music, but we are not, and will never be, playing to the extreme right wing. Montreal's punk scene, and particularly Montreal's skinhead scene, is very polarized, and Mayday is no exception, our band members are Sharps and Redskins. That said we try to make music that can be appreciated a bit more broadly. Whether we are Marxist, Anarchist, or simply antiracist we believe we have more points in common than differences, and that together we can keep our scene clean.



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RT: In your bio, you say that you are from "lower class neighborhood of Centre-Sud." For those of us not familiar with Montreal, what is this neighbourhood and how, if at all, has living in this area impacted you all.

Centre-Sud is one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Montreal, and one of the first working class neighbourhoods in the city. Like many other working class neighbourhoods in Montreal it has aged poorly. Almost all the factories have closed, and now the population is divided between the poor, with all the problems poverty entails, and the new, wealthier inhabitants bringing with them gentrification. Growing up in Centre-Sud therefor means knowing poverty and realizing that it is not always a priority for the ruling class. I'll finish by saying that, when we say we're from Centre-Sud we are saying loudly that this neighbourhood is our home and we will not allow ourselves to be evicted to make way for condos.

RT: Montreal seems to be home to a lot of bands with anti-fascist and/or left-radical politics...Jeunesse Apatride, Union Made, Hold A Grudge, The Prowlers, La Gachette, just to name a few and, now, Mayday. Why do you think this is?? Why so many political bands from Montreal/Quebec??

MD: This question is hard for me to answer because there are many different reasons, and answers. Partially, in Montreal the underground scene has been well established for a long time, to make a list of all the bands that have played here, and that were formed here would be a large project. That said, during the 90s the scene was gripped by a major problem of punk-bashing at the hands of the neo-Nazis. I imagine that this radicalized a lot of people from that generation, who then influenced future generations. As a result it's a scene that has for a long time, bands aside, been encouraged and supported by certain leftists. For example, in the early 2000's the biggest venue for Montreal's punk and skinhead subculture was L'X, a venue run by punks, many of whome held anarchist values. After L'X closed, they opened various other venues which continued to hold true to their values. A little while later the local chapter of RASH (Red and Anarchist SkinHeads) opened an underground venue downtown for their own shows and dj nights.

"WHEN WE SAY WE'RE FROM CENTRE-SUD WE ARE SAYING LOUDLY THAT THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD IS OUR HOME AND WE WILL NOT ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE EVICTED TO MAKE ROOM FOR CONDOS."

Also, I imagine that the fact that we are in a francophone province opens us up to be more influenced by France than by the USA, and so, to make a gross generalization, this gives us access to groups which are much more politically involved (this is particularly the case when it comes to Oi!).

RT: Thanks to Mayday for the interview. Look for them in Ontario in April 2013!

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Rebel Fest 3

Fri April 26+ Sat April 27

Two days/nights of punk rock, hardcore, oi, ska'd up punk and more

Hamilton - This Ain't Hollywood - All Ages/Licensed

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Rebel Time Records is pleased to announce the line-up for Rebel Fest 3! This year we are featuring 15 bands over the course of 2 days: Friday, April 26th and Saturday, April 27th. As usual, the show is all-ages/licensed and at This Ain't Hollywood in Hamilton, Ontario.

Friday, April 26th : The Class Assassins (Toronto), Broadcast Zero (Kitchener), Spanner (Bristol, UK), The Fallout (Toronto), Dismantle (Hamilton), Beat Noir (Kitchener)

Saturday, April 27th: Brutal Youth (Toronto), Hold A Grudge (Montreal), Spanner (Bristol, UK), Farler's Fury (Sherbrooke), Action Sédition (Montreal), Mayday (Montreal), The Nefidovs (Windsor), At What Cost (Hamilton), Matt Damon (Guelph)

Rebel Fest aims to support and spotlight bands that have something to say and something to sing about, and this year we are stoked to have put together a great (and maybe little bit eclectic) mix of punk, hardcore, oi and ska'd-up punk . While we are primarily a punk rock record label, this is our chance to stand with other inspiring and hard-working scenes and say that we are with you.

As usual, we will be providing table space to organizations, collectives and distros that inspire us, and/or that we work with. Rebel Time Records has always been about more than just music and we definitely see Rebel Fest as an opportunity to spread our message. Please be sure to check out the tables and material.

And, also as usual, Rebel Fest will be doing some fund-raising. In 2011 we used a portion of the door proceeds to support a G20 defendant and in 2012 we raised some funds for Hamilton Copwatch. We will be announcing the recipient of this year's fundraising shortly.

We would appreciate any support you can give us in spreading the word about Rebel Fest. If you do a radio show or publish a zine/blog, etc, we would love to hear from you. If you don't well, heck, we'd love it if you put our banners/posters on your Facebook page or share this event!

We want Rebel Fest to be as accessible and safe as possible. We respectfully ask everyone for their help in ensuring that the Fest is a safe, secure and fun place for one and all! Be kind to the venue, staff and fellow attendees!

Finally, we would like to acknowledge and thank everyone who has come to one of our shows/played one of our shows/helped out at one of our shows over the years. We really couldn't do this without you!

We hope to see you at one or both days of Rebel Fest this year!

Connect with us and stay up to date by visiting rebeltimerecords.com or contact rebeltimerecords@gmail.com
- RTR

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RACE, ANARCHY AND PUNK ROCK
THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL BOUNDARIES WITHIN THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

by Otto Nomous

The following essay was the handout for the workshop of the same title at the SF Bay Area Anarchist Conference 2001 in March, which was added due to the fact there wasn't a single workshop/discussion on the issue of race/diversity in the schedule of the conference.

"Yes that's right, punk is dead ... Punk became a fashion just like hippy used to be and it ain't got a thing to do with you or me."
- lyrics by Crass, The Feeding of the Five Thousand(1978).

Ever since the historic protests against the WTO in Seattle at the close of the last millenium, anarchism as a revolutionary theory has been sought after by an increasing number of people from wide ranging walks of life than ever before in recent memory. However, the undeniable fact remains that the make-up of the anarchist movement in the U.S. for the last couple of decades has been a largely homogenous one, i.e. predominantly white and middle class. It also happens to be the case that the vast majority of people who identify themselves as anarchists in the U.S. today are connected to "alternative" subcultures, such as punk rock, in varying degrees. As a person of color and an anarchist with roots in punk rock, I have become deeply concerned with the lack of diversity within the anarchist movement. As long as we fail to attract significantly diverse participation, thus remaining isolated and politically weakened, and fail to link-up with and support anti-racist struggles, we shouldn't keep our hopes up for any radical social transformation in this country. I began to realize that a significant part of the problem lies in the subcultural lifestyle of many anarchists, including myself. What follows is an attempt to offer insight in finding answers for the ever-pressing quest for "diversity" within the anarchist community.

From the numerous situationist slogans that graced the lyrics of early punk bands, to the proliferation of anarcho-punk bands such as Crass and Conflict in the early eighties, punk rock as a subculture has had a unique history of having a strong relationship with explicitly anarchist and anti-capitalist political content over the years. Many anarchists today, including myself, are by-products of punk rock, where most become politicized from being exposed to angry, passionate lyrics of anarcho-punk bands, "do-it-yourself" zines, and countless other sources of information that are circulated within the underground punk distribution networks. Some are introduced to punk through the introduction to the anarchist social circles. Regardless of which comes first, the correlation between the punk scene and the anarchist scene is hard to miss, especially at most anarchist gatherings and conferences. It is by no coincidence that the punk scene

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also shares the familiar demographic as its counterpart, of mostly white, male, suburban, middle class youths.

It should be clear then, that the problem of the lack of race/class diversity within the U.S. anarchist movement will exist as long as it remains within the boundaries of any one particular culture, such as punk. To ignore this reality as merely an insignificant annoyance in an otherwise "politically correct" movement, and pretend that it can be solved as long as we recruit folks of color by being more "open," or if one analyzes the connection between global capitalism and white supremacy, would be a short-sighted mistake, albeit a frequently made one. It is critically important to realize how cultural boundaries can alienate other communities, how subtle forms of denial and guilt-complexes prevent real solutions, and why many of our attempts in the past have failed to provide new, effective approaches in achieving a truly diverse anarchist movement.

Looking at the fact that most people who rear their heads at anarchist "movement" events are roughly between 16-30 years old, with background influences of "punk" or other "alternative" persuasions, it is easy to understand why such "movements" tend to alienate most people than interest them. Punk has primarily appealed to middle-class, straight white boys, who, though they are " too smart" for the rock music pushed by the multinational corporations, still want to "rock out." It is also a culture that is associated with alienating oneself from the rest of society, often times in order to rebel against one's privileged background or parents. There's really nothing wrong with any radical counterculture having its own, distinct character, of course. Indeed, it's probably very good for those included. But we have to admit it is exclusive. Plus, the anarchist movement today has determined its issues of importance. Rarely do these include community organizing or working for social change around issues that most people prioritize, such as against the more subtle forms of racism, ageism and sexism, for a living wage, health care, and so forth. We are often more interested in promoting anarchism and so-called revolutionary organizations than working to provide real alternatives among everyday people. The current anarchist movement, for this reason, is not very relevant to the actual lives of most oppressed people.

"We are often more interested in promoting anarchism and so-called revolutionary organizations than working to provide real alternatives among everyday people. The current anarchist movement, for this reason, is not very relevant to the actual lives of most oppressed people."

Quite disturbingly, my experiences have shown that instead of acknowledging their impact and actually addressing them, many white anarchists rely on either constant denial of their responsibilities or engage in patronizing, token gestures out of privilege-guilt complexes. For example, I have received quite a few very negative and defensive reactions from white anarchists whenever I would mention the words "white" and "middle class" in the same sentence. Some of them defiantly point out that they're actually "working class" because they grew up poor or have to work. What they fail to realize is that it doesn't change the fact that they are able to blend in and benefit from the current anarchist scene which is predominantly middle class, and from white skin privilege.

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It seems as though a fairly extensive arsenal of denial and rationale has been developed within the anarchist scene over the years. One of my favorite examples is from when I approached some members of a group that was organizing the anarchist conference that happened in L.A. during the Democratic National Convention with the fact that the group was almost entirely white punks. Many of them defended it by saying, "I believe in 'Free Association.'" or "I'm not stopping anyone from joining our group. In fact, we'd like other people to join us, but they never do." Such remarks indicate just how little they understand that it is because they operate in comfort zones that suits their subcultural lifestyle or upbringing, which many people cannot relate to. I believe this is one of the most serious and significant obstacles that anarchists face today. Until white anarchists figure out that they actually need to proactively break through race/class/cultural boundaries, they will only continue to perpetuate the isolated anarchist ghetto. One of the more insulting things I've heard not too long ago from a local anarchist, however, is "c'mon, I work with YOU. And you're not white... so I can't be racist." The thought of my(or any other person of color's) mere presence somehow legitimizing someone's attitude on race that is implicit in that statement is painfully absurd. But it reflects the reality that a lot of people still think in those ways. I have also encountered a slightly more subtle form of denial from anarchist discussion lists of people who insist that since the concept of race is a social construct, we shouldn't acknowledge racial identities and instead pretend as if such categories do not exist. What's funny is that they almost always identify themselves as being "white." It sure must be convenient as a white person to pretend that issues of race didn't exist, which reminds me of the similar line associated with the anti-Affirmative Action campaigns of how we now live in a "colorblind society" with "equal opportunities."

Of course, not all white anarchists are clueless about racial/class relations and their positions of privilege. In the Minneapolis anarcho-punk zine Profane Existence, Joel wrote circa '92, "We are the inheritors of the white supremacist, patriarchal, capitalist world order. A prime position as defenders of the capital of the ruling class and the overseers of the underclass has been set aside for us....as punks we reject our inherited race and class positions because we know they are bullshit". However, no matter how well-intentioned, the anarchist scene has been for the most part so deeply entrenched in the lifestyle of the know-it-all, punker-than-thou, vegan/straight edge-fascist, fashion victims or young, transient, train-hopping, dreadlocked, dumpster-diving eco-warriors that not only do most people find it hard to relate to them but they themselves are at a loss when they actually try to reach out to other communities. A typical scenario I find when this is attempted usually only amounts to the aforementioned fluffy, token gestures of solidarity, such as visiting a local black revolutionary group's headquarters and staying just long enough to take pictures with a fist in the air or inviting a person of color to an all-white group just to ease one's guilt. But, to be fair, I must acknowledge that I know of a few exceptions of white/punk anarchists that actually attempt to do serious work with people of color and/or are committed to community organizing. The point I'm making basically is that the general tendencies of most white/punk anarchists tend to be to settle for the

"It sure must be convenient as a white person to pretend that issues of race didn't exist"

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symbolic, and fail to support the real struggles of people to change the world precisely because they have a choice as opposed to people who have to struggle for their livelihood.

It would be useful to look at anarchist groups and projects such as Anti-Racist Action, Earth First, Food Not Bombs and various other anarchist collectives to find out the extent to which such groups are influenced by subcultural lifestyles and how they deal with the issue of diversity. They tend to be good at politicizing lots of people who may identify or feel comfortable with the distinct counter-culture, but they almost never go beyond the boundaries of their comfort zones. Our closest comrades aren't people chosen because of their politics alone - plenty more share our principles and political beliefs - but we never see them, because they don't share our style or cultural preferences. Furthermore, we have seen numerous infoshops spring up in many cities over the years. They usually stand out like an eyesore by becoming more of a punk activist hangout and turning off the people who live in the neighborhood who may have been interested in the project otherwise. We should also be conscious of the fact that many times these projects contribute directly to gentrification of low-income neighborhoods, as punk and anarchist subsocieties are not well-known for their ability to pay high rents. It will ultimately depend on whether they operate as trendy, social gathering spots for punk/anarchists or a place that is respectful of and actively involves the local community.

Undeniably, there is a strong connection between cultural lifestyles and comfort zones and the extent of diversity within any movement. Groups cannot make their racial nature and composition into side issues, an ongoing "process", or working groups. They've got to be right next to the groups' foremost goals. We can keep our subcultural milieu in tact, but our organizing efforts have to step well beyond it. At this point at least, it makes more sense to organize according to neighborhoods and values than according to aesthetic tastes and specific ideologies and develop a culture that draws people together. Anarchism will not solve racism without the people affected by it. And we certainly won't be seeing any kind of a revolution made up of subcultural lifestyle ghettos.

Feel free to read, copy, and distribute this article as often as your heart desires.

www.infoshop.org/rants/race_punk_rock.html

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We'd like to use this space to quickly tell you about one of our projects here at Rebel Time, Rebel Time Radio. Rebel Time Radio is run by the Rebel Time Radio Collective and our program can be heard every Wednesday from 9pm to 10pm and features local and international music which is socially conscious, and/or political in nature, along with interviews and analysis, both from the underground DIY music scene, and greater social movements.

Once in awhile, we also produce podcasts which are freely available on our website; we've included a sample of some of our previous podcasts, below.

Listen live every Wednesday, 9pm - 10pm on Radio 100.3 FM (Waterloo Region)

Live Stream: http://www.soundfm.ca/ (Anywhere)

TV: Digital Box 946 (Waterloo Region)

Podcast: http://www.rebeltimerecords.com/

EPISODE DATE: Jan/30/2013 - Have your laugh and have your say; this one is action packed! 12 great tunes featured as we discuss the upcoming events; Rebel Fest and The Kitchener-Waterloo Anarchist Bookfair & After-Party. Tune in, find out what we think about PETA, Propagandhi's new album, and other ramblings.

EPISODE DATE: Dec/05/2012 - A long over-due update about all things Rebel Time! Tours, Fests, upcoming releases, it's all here! We also share some great news regarding THE FALLOUT and feature some new music from BRUTAL YOUTH.

EPISODE DATE: Oct/10/2012 - We sit down and chat with Elliot, bass player of Vancouver's THE REBEL SPELL and also guitarist and vocalist for The SSRIs (also from Vancouver). The interview touches on a variety of topics, from the silly to the outright serious! And, there is more... we feature a tune from each album The Rebel Spell have released thus far (in chronological order of course), and also premiere a new track from MAYDAY, a new project from the streets of Montreal.

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EPISODE DATE: Aug/22/2012 - East Vancouver punk author Chris Walter visits Ontario on his SNFU book tour and we have the recording to prove it! Tune in to hear parts of his Kitchener performance, along with a selection of SNFU tunes. Chris's commentary is not to be missed, much like his books. We're extremely honoured to have hosted the Author in both Hamilton and Kitchener this year.

EPISODE DATE: Jul/11/2012 - We feature our latest release, the Born Wrong / Kleins96 10 inch split, followed by an interview with Regina's Royal Red Brigade and conclude with a quick update from Jody of Sherbrooke's finest, Farler's Fury!

EPISODE DATE: Jun/06/2012 - "La grève est étudiante, la lutte est populaire!" A ska/punk/hardcore influenced playlist dedicated to the Quebec Student Movement and popular struggle.

EPISODE DATE: Jan/25/2012 - We sit down with Books To Prisoners organizer Paul Sauder and talk about the upcoming WPIRG School of Public Interest, this year themed: "Breaking Bars, Building Bridges." BONUS: 13 Revolutionary & Inciteful tunes!

EPISODE DATE: Nov/16/2011 - Keep on point, keep on pace! We host Ian and Shannon from KW's anti-poverty group "Poverty Makes Us Sick" as we discuss local issues from migrant labour justice to communities fighting back against poverty, austerity and the soon to pass Omnibus Crime Bill C-10. The episode also features songs off the labels newest release "Crisis," from U.K. militant ska punks Spanner!

EPISODE DATE: Nov/02/2011 - Featuring a revolutionary themed playlist with music from Germany, Ireland, U.K., Italy, Spain, Catalunya, Basque, Russia, & North America. We also play both songs from the new Rebel Time release "Treason 45" by The Class Assassins and chat about Occupy Movement, the Oakland General Strike and finish off with an interesting mix of tunes going from hip-hop, to dub then to some grind/crust!

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